

REMARKS

The Restriction Requirement set forth Group I, Claims 1-28, drawn to system for thermal management, classified in class 165, subclass 138; and Group II, Claims 29-46, drawn to process for production of reformat gas, classified in class 48, subclass 197R.

In addition, the action set forth the requirement that if Applicant elects Group I, a further restriction to one of the following inventions is required.

A. Claims 1-11, drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 165, subclass 138.

B. Claims 12-28, drawn to a process, classified in class 165, subclass 138.

It was further stated that if Applicant elects Group II, a further restriction to one of distinct species as set forth below is required.

Species C, wherein reformat stream from auto thermal reformer is introduced into a preferential oxidation reactor, as recited in claims 29-36;

Species D, wherein reformat stream from auto thermal reformer is introduced into a shift reactor into preferential oxidation reactor, as recited in claims 37-46.

It respectfully submitted that the aforesaid requirements are based on an assumption as to classification which is in error. Further such requirements essentially amount to a compounded restriction requirement, result in the parsing of the claims into essentially four different inventions on the basis of an initial premise as to classification, which premise is respectfully submitted to be in error.

To that end, the claims have been amended herewith to further clarify that each of the groups of claims is directed to a fuel reforming system for the production of a

hydrogen- containing reformat stream. See claims 1-11 and claim 47 added herewith. A second related invention is a thermal management process for a fuel reforming system for the production of a hydrogen-containing reformat stream as in claims 12-28 and claim 48 added herewith. A further related invention is a method of operating a fuel reforming system for the production of a hydrogen-containing reformat stream as defined in claims 29-46 and newly added claims 49-52.

It is requested that Examiner reconsider the entire premise on which the classification was made, and the restriction requirement issued, on the basis that even without the clarifying amendment presented herewith, it is clear that the classification of all the related inventions herein all fall under class 423/650 et seq. and/or intimately related class 429/17 et seq. See particularly 423/651, 652, 650; and 429/17 and 20.

Consideration of proper classification according to the aforesaid is consistent with art in the Information Disclosure Statement, showing fuel reforming system for production of hydrogen Pettit 6,077,620 class 429/26; Skala 6,238,815 class 429/17; Clawson 6,123,913. Class 423/652.

To further clarify this point and for Examiner's convenience and easy reference, Applicants have included herewith a further Information Disclosure Statement showing background patents related to the subject matter for which the aforesaid more appropriate classification has been given as 429/17.

Examiner is herewith requested to reconsider the classification and to withdraw all of the requirements for election as set forth in the Office Action.

requirement, Applicant herewith provisionally elects 29-46 for examination, and more specifically 29-36 and newly present claims herein related thereto.


It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is correct in the observation that the restriction requirement engenders considerable "complexity". Thus, it is respectfully submitted that classification should be reconsidered in light of the materials presented herewith, such complexity will be obviated, and ready examination of claims in the case together may be accomplished easily and efficiently.

Conclusion

Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the Office Action. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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